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Newbigin.¹ The introductory portion, which is included in the first two chapters, deals with the well-known distinctions between pigmental and structural colors and a further classification within these two groups. It also contains a brief account of light-producing organisms. Then follows a series of chapters devoted to the consideration of the color phenomena in plants and in the various groups of the animal kingdom, special attention being paid to butterflies and to birds. As a result of this survey, the author states "that it is as yet impossible to give a definite physiological explanation of the origin of pigment; that it is practically impossible to classify pigments in a logical manner; that most of the problems connected with the subject are entirely unsolved." After this general denial of results, except from a simply descriptive standpoint, the author devotes a closing chapter to the theoretic aspects of the subject. This gives in an impartial way the explanations of the origin of different types of coloration as advocated by such Darwinists as Poulton, by such Lamarckians as Cunningham, and by those who, like Wallace, occupy intermediate grounds; Simroth's fanciful conceptions occupy what seems to us an undue amount of space. The Darwinian views are criticised from the standpoint of Piepers's able paper, and the views of the non-Darwinians are dismissed because they imply the inheritance of acquired characters.

The volume shows little originality, but the very fact that the author has no special views of her own to advocate allows her to give the views of others in a more impartial way. The book is concluded with a good list of references, an index of authors, and an index of subjects. It is exceptional in having escaped the hands of the chromo-lithographer or, in fact, those of any illustrator. P.

The Plankton of the Elbe, near Dresden, has been studied by Dr. B. Schorler² in collections made at eleven intervals, from April to November, 1898, in the main stream and in three contiguous bays. The current in the Elbe ranges from 40 to 190 cm. per second, and the plankton was less abundant in the main channel than it was in the quieter water of the adjacent bays, thus illustrating Schröder's law that the volume of plankton in a stream is inversely proportional to the rate of the current. In all, 143 species were found, of which

¹ Newbigin, M. I. *Color in Nature, a Study in Biology*. London, J. Murray, 1898. xii + 344 pp.

² Schorler, B. Das Plankton der Elbe bei Dresden, *Zeitschr. f. Gewässerkunde*, Bd. iii (1900), pp. 1-27.

88 are plants, and about one-third are reported as common. Like that of the Oder, the Elbe plankton is characterized by the predominance of diatoms, especially in spring and autumn. In the main stream the phytoplankton greatly exceeds the zoöplankton in volume and variety and plays a very important part in the self-purification of the river water. Access of sewage does not have a deleterious effect upon the plankton. Dr. Schorler does not regard the Elbe plankton as autonomous, but dependent for its maintenance upon accessions from adjacent bays and lagoons, and from tributary waters. The littoral fauna and flora also contribute to the potamoplankton. In the still water of the bays an abundant animal plankton of rotifers and crustaceans was found, which reached the unusual volume of 112 c.c. per cubic meter of water.

C. A. K.

ZOÖLOGY.

New Edition of "Wilson's Cell." — The penalty that an author must pay for writing a successful text-book is that of revision, and this penalty has been conscientiously and fully met by Dr. Wilson¹ in the new edition of his text-book on the cell. The first edition was published in 1896 and contained 371 pages and 142 illustrations. The second edition, now before us, contains upwards of a hundred additional pages and nearly fifty new illustrations. Minor changes appear on almost every page, and some sections have been entirely recast. The more striking changes reflect the steady growth of cytological knowledge. Thus, the centrosome, which in the first edition was treated as a permanent organ of the cell, is, in view of the most recent work on both plants and animals, regarded now as of mixed character, in that it sometimes exhibits the peculiarities of a permanent organ by being inherited from cell to cell, and at other times is strictly temporary. The statements as to the finer structure of protoplasm have also been considerably modified. In the first edition Dr. Wilson favored the fibrillar theory, though without denying that other views might contain more or less truth. In the second edition the alveolar theory and even the granular theory have gained sufficiently to be fairly abreast their former rival. This change of

¹ Wilson, E. B. *The Cell in Development and Inheritance*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1900. Second edition, xxi + 483 pp.